CLAIMS

1.   A system for inventorying remote objects, comprising:

a plurality of passive tags, each tag associated with a respective object;

a reader configured to interrogate the passive tags with radio frequency identification signals and to receive data from the tags in response thereto; and

means for coupling the reader to the Internet to enable the reader to receive control signals via the Internet and to enable the reader to upload the data received from the tags to the Internet.

2.   The system of claim 1, wherein the coupling means comprises a local connectivity system including a connectivity device and interconnectivity links.

3.   The system of claim 1, wherein the means for coupling the reader to the Internet comprises a communication protocol integrated into the reader.

4.   The system of claim 1, wherein the coupling means comprises wireless communication.

5.   The system of claim 1, wherein the reader is configured to respond to command and control signals received via the Internet only from authorized sources.

6.   An arrangement for monitoring remote inventory, comprising:

a plurality of passive tags, each tag associated with a respective object; a plurality of readers configured to interrogate the passive tags using radio frequency signals and to receive data therefrom; a device for coupling the readers to a network to enable the readers to receive control and command signals via the Internet and for the readers to upload the data to the network that is received from the passive tags.

9

7. The arrangement of claim 6, wherein the network comprises one from among a local area network and the Internet.

8. The arrangement of claim 6, wherein each of the plurality of readers are associated with a predetermined group of the passive tags.

9. The arrangement of claim 6, wherein the readers are configured to receive command and control signals from only an authorized source.

10. The arrangement of claim 6, further comprising at least one remote device configured to be coupled to the network for sending command and control signals to the readers via the network and to receive data uploaded from the readers to the network.

11. A system for management of remote assets, comprising: a plurality of tags, each tag associated with a respective asset; at least one reader configured to interrogate the tags and to receive data therefrom regarding the associated assets; a device for coupling the at least one reader to the Internet to enable the at least one reader to receive control and command signals via the Internet and for the at least one reader to upload the data from the tags to the Internet; and a remote device coupled to the Internet and configured to transmit control and command signals via the Internet to the at least one reader and receive and process the data from the at least one reader.

12. The system of claim 11, wherein each at least one reader is integrally formed with the device for coupling the at least one reader to the Internet.

13. The system of claim 12, wherein the at least one reader comprises a plurality of readers each having the coupling device integrally formed therewith.

14. The system of claim 13, wherein each reader is configured to communicate with a predetermined group of tags.

15. The system of claim 13, wherein the device for coupling the reader to the Internet comprises a wireless communication device that couples the reader to the Internet via radio frequency communication.

16. The system of claim 13, wherein each reader is configured to receive only authorized command and control signals.

17. A method of managing remote assets, comprising: providing a plurality of tags, each tag associated with a respective asset; issuing commands from a device coupled to the Internet to a reader coupled to the Internet to transmit radio frequency interrogation signals from the reader to the plurality of tags; receiving at the reader data from the plurality of tags in response to the radio frequency interrogation signals; transferring the data from the reader to the Internet; receiving the data at the device coupled to the Internet; and processing the received data.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the reader is configured to receive only authorized command and control signals via the Internet.

19. The method of claim 17, further comprising providing a plurality of readers, each reader associated with a predetermined group of tags.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein providing a plurality of readers comprises configuring each of the plurality of readers to be directly connected to the Internet via an integrally formed interconnectivity device.